

Generally speaking, the evidence reinforces common sense and prior research, although it often adds new accents or widens existing avenues of inquiry, as in the comparison of Catholic and Protestant parish life or the important material on agricultural concerns (pp. 327-425). While the book has no single overarching thesis, its recurrent focus is the small town and the rural hinterland. Here, in the provincial matrix of inherited piety, *Stammtisch* cynicism, and gruff peasant humanity, where forcible removal of crucifixes from schools provoked vigorous protest and the forcible removal of Jewish fellow citizens did not, the subtle interplay of social structures and political dynamics achieves a clarity seldom found elsewhere.

Despite its scope, the book is necessarily suggestive rather than exhaustive. The vagaries of archival preservation cause an inevitable unevenness of coverage. Urban conditions receive only passing attention, while the book's chosen format precludes full treatment of all comparative implications. Future publications will presumably close the more obvious of these gaps and also provide some interpretive synthesis embracing the whole project. For now, Broszat and his colleagues have managed the virtuoso feat of celebrating mundane affairs without trivializing the broader issues these reflect. All in all, it is a performance worthy of note.

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FRANZ GSCHWIND. *Bevölkerungsentwicklung und Wirtschaftsstruktur der Landschaft Basel im 18. Jahrhundert: Ein historisch-demographischer Beitrag zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der langfristigen Bevölkerungsentwicklung von Stadt (seit 1100) und Landschaft (seit 1500) Basel*. Summary in English. (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte und Landeskunde des Kantons Basel-Stadt, number 15.) Liestal: Kantonale Drucksaal- und Materialzentrale. 1977. Pp. xix, 687.

The author of this excellent dissertation in demographic and economic history had originally intended to write a history of famine in the rural subject territories ruled by the city of Basel. For various reasons this did not prove feasible; but in the course of his archival research Franz Gschwind happened to discover the original records of five censuses taken between 1698 and 1743, whose existence had been forgotten completely. Together with seven later censuses taken between 1770 and 1850 these records form the basis for a detailed analysis of the interrelationship between population growth and early industrialization in this rural area during the eighteenth century. In order

to gain a long-term perspective Gschwind also traces the population development of the city of Basel from A.D. 1100 and that of its rural territories from 1500 to the present day.

As far as the city is concerned three major phases can be distinguished. First, from the time the first town wall was built around 1100 to the Black Death of 1348-49 the number of inhabitants increased steadily from 2,000 to 12,000. Then there followed a long period of stagnation, characterized by sharp fluctuations, which lasted for more than three hundred years. Between the Black Death and the last epidemic of 1667-68, plague ravaged the city no less than twenty-three times. Altogether these epidemics took a toll of about 50,000 lives. The losses were made up largely by in-migration: about 34,000 newcomers were naturalized during this period. As a consequence Basel's population fluctuated between 5,000 and 12,000. It then increased slowly but did not exceed 15,000 throughout the eighteenth century due to severe restrictions on naturalization imposed after the end of the plague epidemics. The third phase began after the end of the Napoleonic era. Stimulated by urban industrialization and in-migration, the city's population increased from 16,000 in 1815 to 216,000 in 1964. Since then the trend toward suburbanization has ushered in yet another phase of population decline; in 1976 it stood at 191,000 and a recent forecast projects 178,000 inhabitants by 1990.

By contrast, the rural areas subject to the city, consisting of one hundred and fifty square miles, experienced a steady population increase, interrupted by relatively short phases of stagnation. The first estimate for 1497 shows a total population of 5,000. Growth was rapid during the sixteenth century and reached a total of about 14,000 in 1609. By the end of the seventeenth century a rural population of 20,000 had reached the agricultural sustenance limits. It stagnated until 1740 when the introduction of a cottage industry—the weaving of silk ribbons—provided a new basis for further population growth. For more than a century thereafter population growth and the expansion of this cottage industry developed in close correlation. The population reached 44,000 in 1850 when the expansion of this rural industry came to a halt. By then, the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy was in full swing. The spread of factory industry, commerce, and service trades permitted a rapid population increase to 60,000 in 1900 and 96,000 in 1950. Thereafter rapid suburbanization sharply accelerated the growth rate: where formerly the surplus population of the countryside had migrated to the city, the migratory flow was now reversed, carrying the population to 166,000 in 1970 with no end in sight.

I have emphasized here overall growth and migration but the author has also competently analyzed population density, household size, fertility and mortality, as well as the age and sex structure, occupational structure, and religious composition of Basel's rural population during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Interested American readers may be glad to know that the book contains a ten-page summary in English.

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FRANK MCARDLE. *Altopascio: A Study in Tuscan Rural Society, 1587-1784*. (Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History.) New York: Cambridge University Press. 1978. Pp. ix, 226. \$22.50.

Altopascio was a small rural community on the frontier between the Medici Grand Duchy of Tuscany and Lucca. The historical significance of Altopascio in the period 1587-1784, according to Frank McArdle, resides in the fact that the vast quantity of surviving documentation—records of the dukes' administrators and communal and parish records—allows the historian to chart the economic performance of the estate and provides a means for the larger task of "reconstructing a rural society in the past" (p. 10).

In four valuable chapters on demography and the economy, McArdle demonstrates how Altopascio shared in the "general crisis of the seventeenth century," experiencing a precipitous demographic decline after 1647. Accompanying this decline was a severe economic dislocation (at its worst from 1695 to 1725), as revealed by vicissitudes in production and prices on the estate. McArdle demonstrates that this crisis led to crippling levels of indebtedness among the peasants because the economic system worked to the benefit of the exploitative ducal landlord. Capital investment and efficient reforms were also thwarted. In sum, "the crisis at Altopascio only aggravated traditional inequalities between landlord and tenant," and, furthermore, this "tragedy was not rooted in the soil but in the terms of men's relations with other men" (p. 217).

The rest of the book, the social reconstruction of Altopascio, does not succeed nearly as well; here the limitations of McArdle's methods and sources become apparent. A study based solely on records of a single estate cannot hope to provide a perspective from which to confront the problems of interpretation presented by the sources. Any attempt to reconstruct a society in the past must involve interpretation of the polysemous cultural constructs found in the sources. Otherwise the door is open to misinterpretation (see McArdle's

treatment of emancipation, pp. 135-36) and anachronism (for example, the discussion of bearing arms, pp. 199-200).

McArdle discusses the meaning of cultural constructs without providing citations to sources for his remarks. He treats the archival sources not as the locus for historical interpretation but as a body of statistical data. In his hands cultural constructs become so many norms to be rendered statistically. The explanation of such statistics, however, must involve more than the delineation of the class and economic factors that McArdle gives us (valuable as such information is). It must involve reconstruction of the complex cultural system of which these data represent only a finite number of functional moments and from which they derive their meaning. This methodological shortcoming is most evident in the final chapter on social grievances. To conclude that there were no violent uprisings in Tuscany (as opposed to France) because of the *mezzadria* system is to say little. Of course the peasants were dependent on their landlords, but one needs to know how this dependence was symbolically expressed, accepted, and modified in order to understand the cultural logic behind the nonviolence of the exploited Tuscan peasants.

Within the limits of its sources and methods, this book is a welcome contribution. Its strength lies in the presentation of demographic and economic "events." The "reconstruction" of Tuscan rural society, however, must await the exploitation of a greater variety of sources and their interpretation, which will permit the reconstruction not only of norms and events but of the cultural logic connecting them.

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JEAN NICOLAS. *La Savoie au 18^e siècle: Noblesse et bourgeoisie*. Volume 1, *Situations au temps de Victor-Amédée II*; volume 2, *Inflexions au siècle des lumières*. Paris: Maloine; distributed by Librairie de la Nouvelle Faculté. 1978. Pp. xvi, 538; xvi, 540-1, 242.

In recent years historians have seen exhaustive studies of the eighteenth-century peasantry and Jean Nicolas has now written what must be seen as the definitive study of the nobility and bourgeoisie of Savoy. This study, presented by Nicolas for the *doctorat d'état* at the Sorbonne, discusses every aspect of the elite of eighteenth-century Savoy. Naturally there is abundant detail on the numbers of noble and bourgeois families and the amount and form of their wealth. Since much, but not all, of the wealth of these families was concentrated in land, Nicolas analyzes climate, quality of land, and price cycles as well as the more ordinary informa-